

QA-246

Taylor's Mill Ruin  
Centreville vicinity  
Private

circa 1790-1800

This ruin is all that remains of an early mill that can be traced back to the late 18th century, when it was owned by Henry Darden of Centreville. Land records generally refer to this as the "Upper Mill", to distinguish it from Chester Mill, which was located farther downstream, on the edge of Centreville.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Taylor's Mill

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

South side of Taylor's Mill Road approx. one mile south of Centreville

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CentrevilleX VICINITY OF

STATE

COUNTY

MarylandQueen Anne's**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☒ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☒ OTHER abandoned**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

David D. Taylor heirs

Telephone #:

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Centreville☐ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21617**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Queen Anne's County CourthouseLiber #: NBW 8Folio #: 369

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Centreville

STATE

Maryland 21617**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

QA-246

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

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All that remains of Taylor's Mill is the stone and brick foundation, the mill race, and a large earth fill dam. It is located on the south side of Taylor's Mill Road approximately one mile south of Centreville. The mill was built into the east bank of a stream which feeds into the west branch of Corsica Creek. This stream is now known as Old Mill Stream Branch. A second mill, known as Chester Mill, was located farther downstream in the vicinity of the bridge where Maryland Route 213 crosses the stream and enters Centreville. Because of its proximity to this mill and to Centreville, Taylor's Mill was sometimes referred to as "the far mill" and "the Upper Mill".

Although very little remains of the mill structure, it is possible to draw a number of conclusions as to its size and configuration. The foundation is rectangular, 40 feet long and 32 feet wide, with the east gable built into the high bank which separates the marshy stream bottom from the surrounding woods and fields. This foundation is laid in rough fieldstone up to approximately two feet above ground level, and

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.1 DESCRIPTION

is then constructed of brick laid in three-course bond. The walls extend as much as six feet above ground level across the entire east gable and part of the west gable. Only the stone foundation remains of the south wall, while only the east end of the north wall remains visible. A low foundation is also visible about 6 feet inside and parallel to the south wall. This apparently defines the location of a cog pit, although the exact configuration is not clear.

The mill race is still clearly discernible. It leads from a large earthen dam, approximately one-quarter to one-half mile upstream, along the east bank of the stream and terminates at the southeast corner of the mill. Evidently the wheel was located on the south wall, and the water then emptied back into the stream.

Both the dam and the mill race are quite impressive. The dam is 10 to 12 feet high on the downstream side, with a flattened crown that averages approximately 8 feet in width. The mill race averages approximately 15 feet in width, with the east bank formed by the natural streambank and the west bank built up with

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 7.2 DESCRIPTION

earth to a height of 3 to 5 feet. The stream has broken through the dam, and the area which once formed the mill pond is now heavily forested.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
REHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This ruin is all that remains of an early mill that can be traced back to the late 18th century, when it was owned by Henry Darden of Centreville. Land records generally refer to this as the "Upper Mill", to distinguish it from Chester Mill, which was located farther downstream, on the edge of Centreville.

The earliest known reference to the mill is found in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax, in which Henry Darden is listed as owning two tracts, Fishingham and Providence.<sup>(1)</sup> A mill and a miller's house are included in the description of Providence, while a separate entry describes the house and outbuildings at Fishingham, located approximately one mile to the east (see QA-103). Providence was a very large tract, and Darden's share was probably never larger than the 171 acres which he sold in 1810. Precisely how Darden acquired the majority of this tract is unclear,

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 8.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

except that in 1794 he purchased 25 acres of Providence from Richard Tilghman Earle, and the deed describes the land as adjoining the lands of William Ringgold and Henry Darden and his wife Catherine.<sup>(2)</sup> The mill is not mentioned, and it is unclear whether the mill was already standing on Darden's land before 1794, or if he built it on the 25 acre tract between 1794 and 1798. The latter seems more likely, particularly in light of two deeds recorded in 1803, in which Darden purchased one tract of land adjoining his mill pond from Thomas Emory<sup>(3)</sup>, and a second tract "now covered by the water of the said Henry Darden's Mill pond" from Charles Frazier.<sup>(4)</sup>

These two purchases may indicate that Darden had only recently put the mill in operation, or they may have been part of a major expansion effort. Perhaps Darden had decided to enlarge the mill and expand the pond, requiring further purchases of land as the area of the pond increased. It seems unlikely that the 16 foot square mill described in the 1798 Tax would have required a very large pond, and it may be that the brick ruins that survive today, measuring 40 feet by 32, were built between

## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 8.2 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1798 and 1803 as part of an expansion program.

Architectural evidence on the site is of little help in dating the ruins, as the three-course bond used in the walls was common from the late 18th to the mid-19th century. One artifact of interest was found several years ago by Michael Bourne of Sudlersville. This was a brick lying in the rubble with the figure "1800" marked into the face before it was fired. Because of the rather casual form of the numerals and their placement on the face rather than the edge, it cannot be positively taken as a date. Michael has suggested that it may have been marked in the brickyard as a "counting brick", used to keep track of the stacked bricks after firing.

Darden's involvement with the mill apparently ended in 1810, when he mortgaged 171 acres of Providence, including the mill and mill seat, to William Taylor.<sup>(5)</sup> In 1812 the mortgage was transferred to Edward Lloyd<sup>(6)</sup>, and apparently changed hands again soon thereafter. Between 1819 and 1821, Thomas B. Cook purchased three separate parcels of land which are later described as comprising the Upper



## CONTINUATION SHEET

## 8.3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mill farm. The Taylor family did not come into ownership of the property until 1870, when George W. Taylor purchased it from Thomas DeCoursey Ruth.<sup>(7)</sup> On the 1877 map of the county, a grist mill, a saw mill, the mill pond and the mill race are all illustrated, as well as one dwelling and the name G. W. Taylor.<sup>(8)</sup> In 1885, the tax assessment for the Third District lists David D. Taylor as the owner of the "Mill Farm".<sup>(9)</sup> In 1951 a certificate of survey was recorded, based on a survey made in 1908 at the request of David D. Taylor.<sup>(10)</sup> This same document described the land as being the same tract purchased by George W. Taylor in 1870. The property remains in the Taylor family.

Footnotes

- (1) 1798 Federal Direct Tax, Wye Hundred.
- (2) Deeds, Liber STW 2, folio 505. May 16, 1794.
- (3) Deeds, Liber STW 6, folio 272. February 12, 1803.
- (4) Deeds, Liber STW 6, folio 399. July 25, 1803.
- (5) Deeds, Liber STW 9, folio 460. December 20, 1810.
- (6) Deeds, Liber JB 1, folio 433. November 10, 1812.
- (7) Deeds, Liber JW 2, folio 80. January 29, 1870.
- (8) 1877 Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne's County
- (9) 1885 Tax Assessment, District Three. (Hall of Records).
- (10) Deeds, Liber NBW 8, folio 367. January 22, 1951.  
See also JW 2, folio 80-81.

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## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Orlando Ridout V, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Queen Anne's County Historical Society

DATE

10/5/78

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Centreville

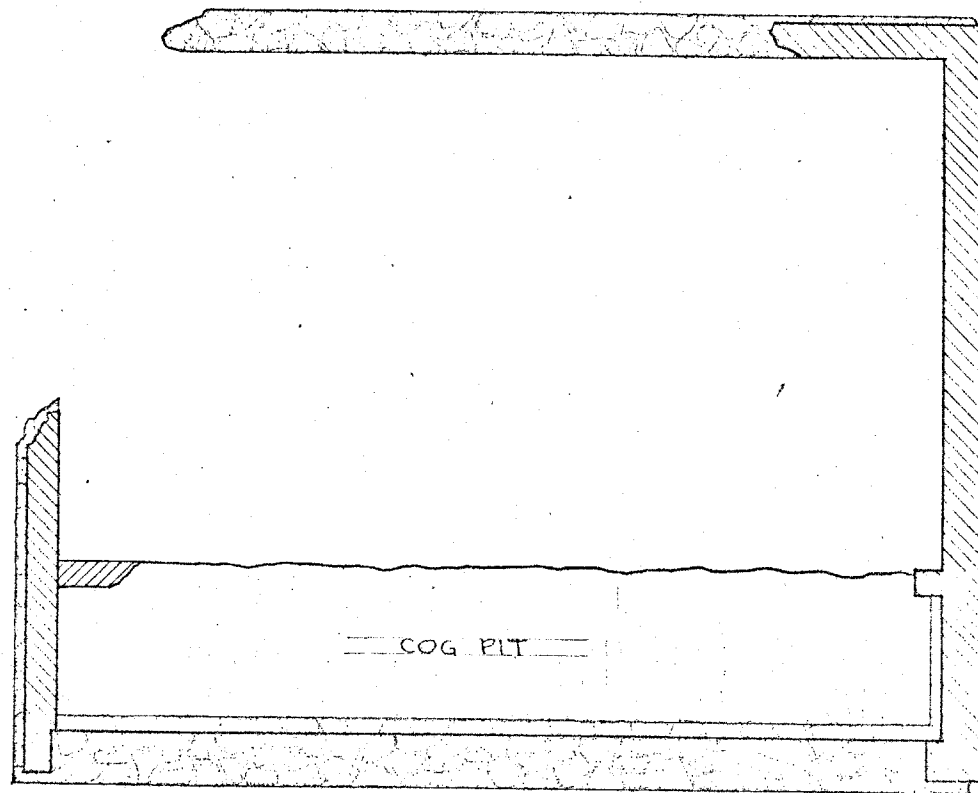
STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438



ORLANDO RIDOUT V

0 2 4 6 8 10  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



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TAYLOR'S MILL RUIN  
CENTREVILLE, MARYLAND

FEBRUARY 3, 1978





QA-246

Taylor's Mill Run, Centerville vic.

ORV

Spring 78





QA-246

Taylor's Mill Run

ORV Spring 78